

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE AND GLOSSARY

ADITI अदिति

ADHIRATHA अधिरथ

The charioteer who found and reared KARNA

AGNI अग्नि

A Vedic God – identified as the Fire God in later times

AGNIVESHA अग्निवेश

AGNEYA आग्नेय

AHICHCHHATRA अहिच्छत्र

AMBALIKA अम्बालिका

Third daughter of the king of KASHI, widow of VICHITRA VEERYA and mother of PARANDU

AMBIKA अम्बिका

Second daughter of the king of KASHI, widow of VICHITRA VEERYA and mother of DHRITARASHTRA

ANGA अंग

An ancient state

ANTARDHANA अन्तर्धान

APSARAS अप्सरा

Celestial dancers

ARJUNA अर्जुन

The third of the PANDAVAS – KUNTI's son by INDRA

ARYAKA आर्यक

ASHRAMA आश्रम

Hermitage

ASHWATTHAMA अश्वत्थामा

ASHWINI KUMARS अश्विनी

The presiding twin deities of medicine

ASURA असुर

One of those denizens of the celestial world characterised by baser passions

AYUS आयुष

BHAGIRATHI भागीरथी

Another name for river GANGA

BHARADWAJA भरद्वाज

Father of DRONA

BHARATA भारत

The descendants of king BHARATA, who was the son of DUSHYANTA and SHAKUNTALA

BHAUMA भौम

BHEEMA भीम

The second of the PANDAVAS – KUNTI's son by VAYU

BHEESHMA भीष्म

Son of SHANTANU and GANGA. He was named DEVAVRATA but came to be known as BHEESHMA for the terrible vow of renunciation he took at the age of twenty to enable SHANTANU to marry.

BHOOMI DEVI भूमि देवी

The Earth personified as a divine woman, bearing the burden of the world with its virtue and vice

BRAHMA ब्रह्मा

The Creator; first of the divine triumvirate

BRAHMACHARI ब्रह्मचारी

One who practices celibacy as part of the disciplined quest of knowledge

BRAHMACHARYA ब्रह्मचर्या

Practice of celibacy in thought,

word and deed. Literally, practice of Brahman which enjoins exclusive attention to the Vedas and matters spiritual

BRAHMANAS ब्राम्हण

Class of people traditionally engaged in learning and scholastics

BRAHMARSHI ब्रह्मर्षि

An ascetic who has attained absolute knowledge

BRAHMASHIRAS ब्रह्मशिरः

CHAITRARAATHA चैत्ररथ

CHARMANWATI चर्मवती

The river now known as Chambal

CHEDI चेदि

CHITRANGADA चित्रांगद

DASHARNA दशार्ण

A clan

DEVAS देव

Denizens of the celestial world, characterized by godliness as opposed to the Asuras who were characterized by baser passions

DEERGHADISH दीर्घ

A king of the ancient state MAGADHA

DEVAVRATA देवव्रत

Son of SHANTANU by GANGA; better known as Bheeshma

DHARMA ARTHA KAMA

धर्म-अर्थ-काम

Dharma is the knowledge of what is right. Artha is the acquisition of wealth and Kama, the fulfilment of desires.

DHRITARASHTRA धृतराष्ट्र
Son of VEDA VYASA and AMBIKA;
born blind because AMBIKA shut
out her vision when approached
by VEDA VYASA

DRONA द्रोण
The son of sage BHARA ADWAJA;
the chief Guru of the KURU AVAS
and the PANDAVAS

DRUPADA द्रुपद
King of PANCHALA who hu-
miliated DRONA, his childhood
friend

DUHSHALA दुःशला

DUHSHASANA दुःशासन
The second of the hundred
sons of DHRITARASHTRA and
GANDHARI

DURVASA दुर्वासा
A rishi known for being hard to
please

DURYODHANA दुर्योधन
The first of the hundred sons of
DHRITARASHTRA and GANDHARI

DUSHYANTA दुष्यन्त

EKALAVYA एकलव्य

GANDHAMADANA गन्धमादन

GANDHARA गान्धार
An ancient state

GANDHARI गांधारी
Wife of DHRITARASHTRA and
daughter of SUBALA, king of
GANDHARA. When she knew she
was to marry a blind man, she
blindfolded herself out of devotion
and regard for her future
husband.

GANDHARVAS गंधर्व
Celestial musicians

GANDHAVATI गन्धवती

GANESHA गणेश

GANGA गंगा
The river Ganga as well as its
personified feminine spirit, who
was born among the mortals as
the result of a curse

GAUTAMA गौतम

GURU DAKSHINA गुरुदक्षिणा
The fee to be given by a disciple
to his Guru as consideration of
instruction imparted

HASTINAPURA हस्तिनापुर
The capital of the KURUS, on the
banks of GANGA

HIMALAYA हिमालय

HIRANYADHANUS हिरण्यधनुष

HOMA KUNDA होम कुंड
The receptacle for the sacrificial
fire in which the libations are
poured

ILA इला

INDRA इन्द्र
A Vedic God – identified as the
Rain God in later times

INDRADYUMNA इंद्रद्युम्न

ITIHASA इतिहास
An epic – literally “and so indeed
it was”

JAIMINI जैमिनी

JAMADAGNI जमदग्नि
A Rishi

JANAMEJAY जनमेजय

JAYA जया

KAMPILYA काम्पिल्य

KANWA कण्व

KARNA कर्ण
The son of KUNTI by SURYA.
Abandoned by KUNTI because
she was unwed, he was found
and reared by a charioteer.

KASHI काशी
An ancient kingdom

KAURAVA कौरव
Descendants of KURU and the
sons of DHRITARASHTRA

KHANDAVA खांडव

KRIPA कृपा
Guru of the KURU princes, and
twin brother of DRONA'S wife
KRIPI

KRIPI कृपी
Twin sister of KRIPA, and wife of
DRONA

KRISHNA DWAIPAYANA
कृष्ण द्वैपायन
Original name of VEDA VYASA;
KRISHNA because he was dark,
DWAIPAYANA because he was
born on an island

KSHATRIYA क्षत्रिय
Class of people, traditionally
engaged in the military arts

KUNTI कुंती
Wife of PANDU, and daughter of
SHOORA reared by KUNTIBHOJA

KUNTIBHOJA कुन्तिभोज

KURU कुरु
A descendant of BHARATA. He
sanctified the land known as KU-
RUKSHETRA where much later
the battle of the MAHABHARATA
was fought and where GITA was
preached.

KURUJANGALA कुरुजंगल
The country of the KURUS

KURUKSHETRA कुरुक्षेत्र

MADRA मद्र
The king of the MADRA people

MADRI माद्री
Princess of the MADRA kingdom and second wife of PANDU

MAGADHA मगध
An ancient state

MAHABHARATA महाभारत

MAHENDRA महेंद्र
A range of mountains between the rivers now known as MAHA-NADI and GODAVARI

MAKANDI माकन्दी

MANTRA मंत्र
A mystical chant

MANU मनु
Ancestor of the human race

MATSYA मत्स्य
The name of a state

MITHILA मिथिला
The capital of the VIDEHA

MITRA मित्र
A Vedic God, often associated with VARUNA

MUKTI मुक्ति
Deliverance of the spirit from the body

MUNI मुनि
Ascetic, also known as rishi

NAGA नाग
Literally, the serpents. It also refers to a race of snake-worshippers, or a race which has a snake for its totem. Perhaps the ancestors of the modern inhabitants of India's north-eastern state, Nagaland.

NAGA KINGDOM नागलोक
The world of the NAGAS

NAHUSHA नहुष

NAKULA नकुल
The fourth of the PANDAVAS, twin of SAHADEV – MADRI's son by the ASHWINI KUMARS

NARA नर
A divine being in human form (commonly connected with Narayana) with whom Arjuna the Pandava is identified

NARAYANA नारायण
The name of VISHNU (Krishna)

NISHADAS निषाद
A group of tribes, low in social hierarchy in ancient India

NIVATAKAVACHA निवातकवच
An Asura tribe, reputedly invincible because of their skill in magical weapons

PAILA पैल

PANCHALA पांचाल

PANDAVA पाण्डव
Son of Pandu

PANDU पाण्डु
Son of VEDA VYASA and AMBA – LIKA

PARASHARA पराशर
A rishi, father of VEDA VYASA. See SATYAVATI

PARASHURAMA परशुराम
Sixth incarnation of VISHNU, and son of sage JAMADAGNI. He was famous for his valour and knowledge of esoteric weapons.

PARVATA पार्वत

PASHUPATA पाशुपत
Divine missile of SHIVA in his aspect as PASHUPATI, lord of all fauna

PAURAVA पौरव
Descendant of PURU

PRAMANAKOTI प्रमाणकोटी

PRATIPA प्रतीप

PRISHATA प्रिषत

PRITHA प्रिथा

PUNDRA पुण्ड्र
The people of the state Pundra

PURU पुरु

PURURAVAS पुरुरवस

RADHA राधा
After whom KARNA is often referred to as RADHEYA, son of RADHA

RAJARSHI राजर्षि
One, who though born a KSHA-TRIYA, is sanctified as a Rishi due to ascetic austerities

RISHI ऋषि
A sage

SAHADEVA सहदेव
The fifth of the PANDAVAS, twin of NAKULA – MADRI's son by the ASHWINI KUMARS

SAL साल
Botanical name: Shorea robusta

SAMVARANA संवर्ण

SARASWATI सरस्वती

SARPA SATRA सर्प सत्र
Twelve-year-long snake sacrifice

SATYAVATI सत्यवती
Mother of VEDA VYASA by sage PARASHARA, and mother of CHITRANGADA and VICHITRAVEE-RYA by SHANTANU

SHAKUNTALA शकुन्तला

SHALYA शल्य**SHANTANU** शान्तनु

Son of PRA TEEPA who ruled over the KURU empire, and the father of BHEESHMA

SHARADWAN शरद्दान

He is believed to have been born fully equipped with arrows which explains his preference of martial skills to Vedic skills.

SHAstra शास्त्र

Sacred lore

SHATASHRINGA शतशृंग**SHIVA** शिव

The Destroyer; third of the divine triumvirate

SHOODRA शूद्र

The class of people traditionally engaged in tilling soil

SHOORA शूर

Grandfather of KRISHNA, and father of VASUDEVA

SHRADDHA श्राद्ध

The concluding ritual following the death of a relative which assures him/her of salvation

SHUKA शुक**SHWETAketu** श्वेतकेतु

An ancient sage who prescribed that chastity be a cardinal virtue in married women because he was provoked when his mother was led away by a Brahmana, in the presence of his unprotected father.

SOOTA सूत

One engaged in the profession of driving chariots

SUBALA सुबल

King of GANDHARA

SUMANTA सुमन्त**SURYA** सूर्य

The Sun God, by whose grace KARNA was born to KUNTI

UCHCHAISHRA VASU उच्छेःश्रवस

A celestial horse

UDDALAKA उद्दालक

Father of SHWETAketu

VAIKUNTHA वैकुण्ठ

The seat (and therefore the heavenly abode) of VISHNU

VAISHAMPAYANA वैशंपायन**VAISHYA** वैश्य

The class of people traditionally engaged in trade and commerce

VANAPRASTHA ASHRAMA

वानप्रस्थ आश्रम

The third of the four stages of human life as laid down in Hindu thought: the stage of retirement and introspection. The first stage enjoins disciplined quest of knowledge; the second, fullment as a householder; and the last, renunciation.

VARUNA वरुण

The presiding deity of water

VASU UPARICHARA

वसुः उपरिचर चेदि

VASUKI वासुकि**VASUSHENA** वसुशेण

The original name of KARNA, the firstborn of KUNTI

VAYAVA वायव**VAYU** वायु

The presiding deity of wind

VEDA VYASA वेदव्यास

Literally, the man who analysed and compiled the VEDAS

VICHITRAVEERYA विचित्रवीर्य**VIDEHA** विदेह

A clan

VIDURA विदुर

Son of VEDA VYASA and AMBA - LIKA's maid

VISHNU विष्णु

The Preserver; second of the divine triumvirate

VITI-DANDA वीटि - दण्ड

A game played with a chiselled peg (VITI) and a short stick (DANDA).

YADAVA यादव

One descended from YADU

YADU यदु

Son of YAYATI and DE VAYANI. He refused to exchange his youth with the age of his father and was therefore cursed by Yayati that the sons of Yadu shall never ascend the royal throne.

YAMUNA यमुना**YAYATI** ययाति**YUDHISHTIRA** युधिष्ठिर

The first of the PANDAVAS - KUNTI's son by DHARMA

YUGA युग

The time concept of the ancient Indians. The age of the universe is divided into four yugas which complete the cyclic pattern of its existence. These are - Krita Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga and Kali Yuga, after which comes a deluge before the cycle starts again. Virtue diminishes with the passage of each Yuga.

YUYUTSU युयुत्सु

The son of DHRIT ARASHTRA and a woman of VAISHYA class